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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

OFFICE OF INFORMATION

NATIONAL FARM PROGRAM DATA
1932-1940

WEST VIRGINIA HIGHLIGHTS

The story of agriculture today in West Virginia and in the rest of the Nation is the story of an improved agriculture. Here are the highlights of progress under the National Farm Program in West Virginia during the 7 years since it was started:

INCOME: Farmers Make More Money--1939 cash income up 57 percent from 1932; buying power 143 percent ~~from~~ ^{of} 1932; farm real estate values in 1940 up 15 percent from 1933; 21,020 bushels of wheat put in the Ever-Normal Granary under 1939 commodity loans; \$11,849,828 loaned by Farm Credit Administration agencies from 1933 to 1939; debts of low income farmers reduced \$778,355 under Farm Security Administration debt adjustment service; 29,102,000 pounds of surplus foodstuffs distributed to needy in last fiscal year.

CONSERVATION: Farmers Are Conserving Their Soil--46,000 West Virginia farmers participated in the 1939 AAA program, representing about 76 percent of the State's cropland; 263,824 acres covered by 5-year agreements with the Soil Conservation Service in 1939; 301,700 trees distributed for planting during 1939.

SECURITY: Farmers Are More Secure In Their Homes--9,507 farm families received rural rehabilitation loans totalling more than \$3,026,600 from 1935 to 1940; \$348,188 made in grants in the same period; 50 tenant families started toward ownership by loans for farm purchases; 427 miles of rural electric lines to serve 1,538 farm families made possible by allotments of Rural Electrification--12,671 more farms getting central station electric service in 1939 than in 1935.

DEMOCRACY: Farmers Help Run The Programs--55 county AAA offices with 1,305 county and community committeemen administer the AAA program locally; 55 county committees and 16 tenant purchase committees working on program of Farm Security Administration; 38 local National Farm Loan associations and 4 production credit associations in operation; 7 county land-use planning committees formed.

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PART ONE: FARM INCOME

West Virginia farmers in 1939 had 57 percent more cash income than they did in 1932. Farm cash income in West Virginia was \$42,510,000 in 1939. Government payments accounted for \$1,800,000 of this amount directly. The 1939 cash income was 23 percent less than in 1929, when cash income was \$55,000,000. Cash income in 1932 was \$27,000,000.

Substantial gains in cash income from 1932 to 1939 by the producers of West Virginia's most important farm products are shown in the following table:

TABLE I. Cash Income Received by West Virginia Farmers for Principal Commodities Listed, in 1932 and in 1939, With Amount and Percent of Change

Commodity			Amount of	Percent of
	Cash Income	1/	Increase,	Increase,
	1932	: 1939 2/	1939 over	1939 over
		:	1932	1932
(Thousands of dollars)		(Percent)		
Milk	7,956	9,433	1,477	19
Cattle and calves	3,533	8,585	5,052	143
Chickens and eggs	4,994	5,979	985	20
Apples	2,043	3,186	1,143	56
Corn and hogs	1,130	2,626	1,496	132
Sheep and lambs	1,737	2,065	328	19
Truck crops	514	1,946	1,432	279
Potatoes	596	752	156	26
Wheat	471	735	264	56
Wool	359	641	282	79

1/ Because farm income statistics are being revised, all figures in this table are not strictly comparable. For the most part figures are on a calendar year basis, but there are a few commodities which are on a crop year basis for 1932. All income figures in this table exclude Government payments.

2/ Preliminary.

For the country as a whole cash farm income in 1939, including Government payments, was 82 percent larger than in 1932. Cash farm income was \$4,682,000,000 in 1932 and \$8,540,000,000 in 1939, including \$807,000,000 in Government payments.

Prices of Farm Commodities

Better prices for West Virginia's leading farm commodities have put more cash in the hands of the farmers of the State. The improvement in prices received by West Virginia farmers for their principal commodities is shown in the following table:

Table II. Average Prices Received by West Virginia Farmers
for Commodities Listed, in 1932 and in 1939

<u>Commodity</u>	<u>Unit</u>	1932 (Dollars)	1939 1/ (Dollars)
Milk (wholesale)	cwt.	1.80	2.05
Hogs	cwt.	3.75	7.10
Beef cattle	cwt.	4.40	6.60
Veal calves	cwt.	5.20	8.40
Sheep	cwt.	2.85	3.30
Lambs	cwt.	4.70	8.00
Wheat	bu.	.60	.88
Corn	bu.	.51	.73 2/
Oats	bu.	.32	.45
Potatoes	bu.	.57	.90
Apples	bu.	.62	.60
Wool	lb.	.12	.25
Butter	lb.	.20	.23--
Chickens	lb.	.11	.146
Eggs	doz.	.147	.187
Tobacco	lb.	.148	.182

1/ Preliminary.

2/ Includes loan corn at average loan value.

Farm Purchasing Power

Both farm income and prices paid by farmers declined sharply from 1929 to 1932, but farm income declined more. From 1932 to 1939 there was an increase in both farm income and prices paid by farmers, but farm income increased more. Thus farm buying power fell off from 1929 to 1932 and climbed upward from 1932 to 1939.

For the United States as a whole farm buying power in 1939 was 172 percent as much as in 1932 and 99 percent of the 1929 level. In other words, farmers were able to buy about as much in 1939 as in 1929 and 72 percent more than in 1932.

In West Virginia farm purchasing power in 1939 was 143 percent as much as in 1932 and 97 percent of the 1929 level. Thus West Virginia farmers in 1939 were in a position to buy 43 percent more of the things they needed than in 1932 and only 3 percent less than in 1929.

The farmer's buying power can also be shown by the unit exchange value of farm products, namely, the ratio of prices received by farmers to prices paid by farmers for commodities used in living and production. While this measurement is not available on a State basis, West Virginia farmers naturally benefited from nation-wide improvement in the exchange value of farm products.

For all farm commodities, the unit exchange value was 26 percent higher in 1939 than in 1932. The following table, comparing 1939 and 1932, shows the unit exchange value of all farm products, as well as specified groups of farm commodities that are important in West Virginia.

Table III. Unit Exchange Value * of all Farm Products and of Specified Groups of Commodities Important in West Virginia

	: Percent of Base Period :	Percent	
	1910-1914	: Change	
	1932	1939	1939 over 1932
All farm products	61	77	/ 26
Meat animals	59	91	/ 54
Dairy products	78	86	/ 10
Chickens and eggs	77	78	/ 1

*Ratio of prices received by farmers for commodities used in living and production, 1910-14 base.

Farm Real Estate Values

Gains in farm income, prices and buying power have been reflected in rising real estate values on West Virginia farms. In the year ending March 1933 the value of farm real estate was only 74 percent of the period before the World War. From this low point the estimated value per acre in West Virginia rose to 85 percent of pre-war for the year ending March 1940. Thus West Virginia farmers found their real estate worth about 15 percent more early in 1940 than in the first part of 1933.

For the United States as a whole, in the year ending March 1940 farm real estate values rose to 85 percent of the level before the World War, compared with only 73 percent of pre-war in the year ending March, 1933. The 16 percent gain from 1933 to 1940 followed more than a decade of unbroken decline in the value of farm real estate.

Farm Foreclosures, Sales and Bankruptcies

Along with a rise in farm real estate values since 1932, there were more voluntary sales of farms in West Virginia and fewer forced sales and bankruptcies.

Voluntary sales and trades of West Virginia farms were 22.1 per thousand for the year ending March 1939, compared with 18.3 per thousand for the year ending March 1933.

On the other hand, the number of forced farm sales in the State declined from 67.1 for the year ending March 1933 to only 16.1 per thousand for the year ending March 1939.

Farm bankruptcies in West Virginia dropped from a total of 28 in the year ending June 30, 1933 to 16 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1939.

In the United States as a whole, voluntary sales and trades of farms rose from 16.8 per thousand in the year 1933 to 28.2 per thousand in the year ending March 1939, and forced sale of farms declined from 54.1 per thousand to 16.8 per thousand in the same period; farm bankruptcies in the entire country decreased 76 percent from 1933 to 1939.

All Phases of Farm Program Contribute to Income Improvement

Farmers of West Virginia received \$1,123,000 in conservation payments under the 1937 program, \$1,202,092 under the 1938 program, and an estimated \$1,578,236 under the 1939 program, including county association expenses.

In addition, under the Price Adjustment Act of 1938 farmers of the State received an estimated \$44,575 in parity payments on their 1939 production.

For the United States as a whole, payments under the 1939 conservation program totalled \$506,179,199, including county association expenses.

Federal Credit Aids Agriculture

Farmers in West Virginia obtained \$11,849,828 in loans from institutions under the supervision of the Farm Credit Administration from May 1, 1933, through December 31, 1939. In addition, credit was advanced to a considerable number of farmer cooperatives and privately organized agricultural financing institutions.

The Federal Land Bank of Baltimore making long-term first mortgage loans had \$7,881,134 outstanding in West Virginia on December 31, 1939, including loans made prior to the organization of the Farm Credit Administration. In addition, \$2,586,180 of first and second mortgage Land Bank Commissioner loans were outstanding on that date.

From 1933 to 1935 almost 87 percent of Federal land bank and Commissioner loans made in West Virginia were used to pay off old debts. Although the largest percentage of loans continues to be made for refinancing, since October 1, 1935, some 559 West Virginia farmers and farm tenants have purchased farms, using \$966,100 credit obtained from the Federal Land Bank of Baltimore and the Federal Farm Mortgage Corporation, which provides funds for Land Bank Commissioner loans, to finance the purchases. This includes the resale on credit terms of farms which had been acquired by these agencies.

The 4 production credit associations operating in the State have made 5,046 loans aggregating \$4,359,208 since their organization in 1934. These associations make loans for all types of short-term farm operations. Loans outstanding on December 31, totalled \$826,193.

The Baltimore Bank for Cooperatives makes loans to farmers' marketing, purchasing, and farm business associations. On December 31, 1939, the Baltimore Bank had loans outstanding to West Virginia cooperatives aggregating \$18,738.

In the United States as a whole, during the same period, individual farmers and their cooperative organizations obtained \$5,951,000,000 in loans and discounts from institutions under supervision of the Farm Credit Administration. Land bank loans outstanding on December 31, 1939, totalled \$1,905,000,000; Land Bank Commissioner loans, \$691,000,000; production credit associations numbering 528, in six years made 1,312,000 loans aggregating \$1,442,000,000; in the same period the 12 district banks for cooperatives and the Central Bank made 6,863 loans aggregating \$491,047,000.

Debt Adjustment

In West Virginia 1,297 farmers, through the Farm Debt Adjustment Service of the Farm Security Administration, reduced their debts through agreement with their creditors by \$773,355 in the period September 1, 1935 to December 31, 1939, a debt reduction of 18.7 percent. As a result West Virginia farmers have been able to pay \$68,667 in back taxes.

In the United States as a whole, 111,131 farmers reduced their debts by adjustments totalling \$84,942,798 or 23.7 percent, and as a result have been able to pay more than \$4,860,000 in back taxes.

Commodity Loans Protect Income

Corn and wheat loans serve to protect and stabilize farm income, help to stabilize market supplies and prices, and protect both consumers and producers against the calamity of crop failure. Under the 1939 program in West Virginia 44 wheat loans were made totalling \$14,641.77 on 21,020 bushels of wheat.

In the United States as a whole, 70,000 wheat producers obtained loans on their 1938 crop, totalling about \$45,000,000 on 85,700,000 bushels of wheat, and about 235,000 producers stored 167,000,000 bushels of their 1939 crop under loans totalling about \$115,000,000.

Exports Aided

Two major export programs for wheat and cotton have assisted United States producers to retain their fair share of the world market. In the fiscal year which ended June 30, 1939 the first year of the wheat export program, 118 million bushels of wheat were sold for export. Of this amount, export of 94 million bushels was assisted directly by the export program. From July 1 through December 31, 1939 sales for export of approximately $24\frac{1}{2}$ million bushels of wheat and wheat in the form of flour were assisted by the continuing export programs.

How the wheat program has operated to improve the domestic wheat prices in the last year and a half is shown in the following: In August 1938 the average U. S. farm price was 34 cents under the Liverpool price. In August 1939, the U. S. price was about 3 cents above Liverpool. Since Liverpool is normally about 30 cents over the domestic farm price, this meant the U. S. farmer was receiving about 33 cents a bushel more for his wheat than if his price had been based on the world price.

Domestic Consumption Increased

Expanded domestic distribution and consumption of surplus farm products was brought about through two types of programs; direct purchase of commodities for distribution to needy families through State welfare agencies, and the Food Order Stamp Plan which puts increased food buying power directly into the hands of low-income families.

In West Virginia in the fiscal year ending June 30, 1939, 29,102,000 pounds of surplus foodstuffs were distributed by the Federal Surplus Commodities Corporation, compared with a total of 1,970,079,155 pounds distributed throughout the United States in the same period.

Commodities purchased in West Virginia included 9,300 barrels of white flour.

PART TWO: CONSERVATION AND WISE USE OF AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

Income improvement and conservation of natural resources have gone hand in hand in West Virginia since 1933.

Under the first agricultural conservation program in 1936 about 16,000 West Virginia farmers participated. Of the total cropland, about 32 percent, or 683,000 acres, was covered by applications for payments. A total of 38,081 acres was diverted from soil-depleting crops. Soil-building practices were put into effect on about 193,300 acres as follows: New seedings of legumes and legume mixtures, perennial grasses for pasture, and green manure crops - 121,395 acres; fertilizer and lime applications - 71,830 acres; and forest tree planting - 72 acres.

West Virginia farmers have continued to participate actively in the AAA programs. There were 28,718 payees in the 1937 program and 40,286 in the 1938 program. Applications for payments covered 1,050,100 acres, or 52 percent of the cropland in the State, under the 1937 program and 1,344,000 acres, or 69 percent of the cropland, under the 1938 program.

Soil-building practices were put into effect in the State as follows under the AAA programs for 1937 and 1938:

	<u>Unit</u>	<u>1937</u>	<u>1938</u>
New seedings	acres	225,081	320,985
Green manure and cover crops	acres	26,842	26,389
Forest tree practices	acres	751	905
Fertilizer and lime applications	tons	168,680	264,965

In the United States as a whole, under the 1938 Agricultural Conservation Program, new seedings 30,075,000 acres, and green-manure and cover crops 25,244,000 acres. Fertilizer and lime applications totalled 5,547,000 tons. Forest tree practices covered 197,000 acres and pasture practices about 2,205,000 acres. Protected summer fallow, strip cropping, contour farming, and listing were carried out on 15,000,000 acres. Terracing was carried out to the extent of 392,036,000 linear feet.

Soil Conservation Service Activities

In addition to the Agricultural Conservation Program, many West Virginia farmers have signed five-year agreements with the Soil Conservation Service for complete programs of erosion control and good land management. As of December 31, 1939, 1,751 farms including 263,824 acres have been placed under such agreements. This figure includes land in Soil Conservation projects, CCC camp soil conservation work areas, and farms planned cooperatively by the Soil Conservation Service and State Extension Service.

Approximately 13,415 acres unsuited to continued cropping have been purchased and developed for uses for which this land is better suited, principally forestry and grazing under the Land Utilization Program.

In the United States as a whole, a total of 48,267,000 acres of farm land in 82,000 farms were covered by 5-year contracts with the Soil Conservation Service up to June 30, 1939. Soil Conservation Service demonstration areas now include 68,847,000 acres. Soil Conservation Districts, numbering 217, covered a combined area of 120,000,000 acres of the Nation's 1,900,000,000 acres of land by January 1, 1940, with another 100 districts in process of organization. Within the 217 organized districts were 1,000,000 farms.

Approximately 8,600,000 acres of land unsuited to continued cropping have been purchased and developed for uses for which this land is better suited, principally forestry and grazing.

Forest Conservation and Reforestation

Approximately 65 percent of the 117,000 farms in West Virginia contain woodland, and farm woodlands in the aggregate amount to 3,600,000 acres, or about 38 percent of the State's farm area.

Forest conservation and reforestation on both public and private lands in West Virginia have been advancing rapidly from 1932 to 1940. Under the Clarke-McNary law, which provides for Federal-State cooperation in the production and distribution of trees, 301,700 trees were distributed for planting on farm lands during 1939. Extensive plantings of forest trees also are made on farm lands under agreement with the Soil Conservation Service.

The U. S. Forest Service administers 899,474 acres in the Monongahela National Forest in West Virginia. Under the provisions of the Weeks Law more than 500,000 low-producing acres have been purchased or approved for purchase by the National Forest Reservation Commission in 6 years. Through protection and careful management they are rapidly being restored to productivity.

During the fiscal year 1939 more than 270,000 people visited the Monongahela National Forest for recreation purposes, many of them using the 7 developed camp grounds. 2,737,000 board feet of timber valued at \$8,242 were cut on this National Forest in the past fiscal year.

During 1939, 445 acres were reforested by planting, bringing the total National Forest land successfully planted in West Virginia to 9,504 acres.

In the United States as a whole, the national forest system now includes about 175 million acres in 40 States. More than 12 million acres have been purchased or approved for purchase for national forests since March 1933, about $2\frac{1}{2}$ times as much land as was purchased for national forests in the preceding 22 years. Approximately 125 million trees produced largely in Forest Service nurseries were planted during 1939 on 131,000 acres of national forest land.

In the Prairie States Forestry Shelterbelt Project of the Forest Service 125 million trees have been used in 11,000 miles of plantings and provide protection for about 3 million acres of land, in the Great Plains, where protection is especially needed.

About 314,000 trees were planted on farm lands in 1938 in the farm forestry program of the Soil Conservation Service, and 55 million trees were distributed for farm planting under Forest Service-State cooperation through the Clarke-McNary law.

Under the A.A.A.A. program in 1938 about 55,445 acres of farm land were planted to forest trees.

PART THREE: GREATER SECURITY AND BETTER LIVING ON THE LAND

Aside from the program designed to provide greater equality of income for agriculture as a whole, and nation-wide conservation practices, special attention has been given to more needy farm families requiring additional aid to become self-supporting. Special programs have been directed to low-income farmers suffering from such additional handicaps as drought, poor farming practices, worn-out or inadequate land, unsound tenure conditions, or overwhelming debt.

From 1935 to 1940 in West Virginia, the Farm Security Administration aided 9,507 farm families with rural rehabilitation loans aggregating \$3,026,600 to enable them to get a new start and again become self-supporting.

By following complete farm and home management plans in 1939, 6,924 rehabilitation borrowers in West Virginia had an average net income of \$693.69 per family as compared with \$531.32 in the year before they came to F. S. A. for help, an increase of 19 percent, and increased their average net worth over and above all debts by 16 percent in the same period. Thus these families had added \$1,397,661 to the wealth of their communities and increased their own annual incomes by a total of \$778,083. The typical rehabilitation family in West Virginia has borrowed \$436.55 and already has repaid \$93.14. West Virginia rehabilitation borrowers in 1939 produced \$2,327,364 worth of goods for home consumption, compared with \$1,952,637 worth before entering the Farm Security Administration program. In 1939 these families canned an average of 417 quarts of fruits and vegetables per family, for home consumption; produced an average of 537 gallons of milk per family; and an average of almost 13 tons of forage per family. Rehabilitation borrowers in West Virginia are now operating an average of 102 acres, an increase of $4\frac{1}{2}$ acres since they came to the program. This increased acreage, while not adding materially to the production of commercial crops, has maintained a better diet for these families.

At the close of 1939, 1,613 West Virginia families had received grants for emergency relief aggregating \$348,188.

Under the Bankhead-Jones Act loans for farm purchases were made to 50 tenant families in West Virginia as of December 31, 1939, aggregating \$298,301.

In the United States as a whole, from 1935 to 1940, the Farm Security Administration aided approximately 800,000 farm families with rehabilitation loans. By following complete farm and home management plans, 360,000 of those borrowers covered by a survey in 1939 had increased their net worth over and above all debts by 26 percent, and their production of food for home consumption by 64 percent. The average borrower reported increasing his net worth by more than \$232.40 since coming into the program.

The Farm Security Administration has made rehabilitation loans totalling more than \$370,000,000 since 1935. Although these loans are usually made for a period of five years, and much of the money is not yet due, these farmers who could not get adequate credit from any other source already have repaid more than \$130,000,000 into the U. S. Treasury. Ultimately it is expected that at least 80 percent of these loans will be collected.

Under the Bankhead-Jones Act, loans for farm purchases were made to 6,676 tenant families by December 31, 1939.

Rural Electrification

By June 30, 1939, the Rural Electrification Administration had made allotments in West Virginia aggregating \$503,000 for the construction of 427 miles of line to serve 1,538 farm families.

By June 30, 1939, 16,318, or 14.7 percent of the farms in the State, had central station service, compared with 3,647, or 3.5 percent having central station service before the R.E.A. began operations in 1935. This is a net increase of 12,671 farms or 347.4 percent. Surveys showed that 55 percent of West Virginia farms served by R.E.A. lines have washing machines; 63 percent have electric irons; 21 percent have electric vacuum cleaners; general utility electric motors, electric chick brooders and poultry lighting have gained favor since the beginning of the program.

There were 2 REA-financed rural electric systems in the State by September 1, 1939.

In the United States as a whole, to the close of 1939, the Rural Electrification Administration of the Department of Agriculture has made total allotments of \$273,000,000 for the construction of 260,000 miles of line to serve 600,000 farm families. Already 400,000 farms have been connected to REA-sponsored lines, the greater majority of which are cooperatively managed. The number of electrified farms in the United States has more than doubled from 1935 to the present time. Approximately 25 percent of American farms were electrified by January 1, 1940, compared with 10.9 percent on January 1, 1935.

PART FOUR: STRENGTHENING DEMOCRACY THROUGH THE FARM PROGRAMS

Democracy has been both the end and the means of National Farm Programs from 1933 to the present. Through local committees, farmers have the responsibility for local administration.

Nearly 6 million of the nation's 6,800,000 farmers are participating in the Agricultural Conservation Program today. Participation in West Virginia and in the United States since the AAA began in 1933 was as follows:

<u>West Virginia</u>	<u>Number of contracts accepted by AAA</u>	<u>United States</u>	
1933	972	1933	1,625,912
1934	4,950	1934	3,105,110
1935	4,226	1935	3,399,779
1936 1/	399	1936 1/	291,652

1/ Winter wheat and rye contracts made before January 6, 1936.

West Virginia

United States

Number of payees under
the Agricultural Con-
servation Program

1936	16,004
1937	28,718
1938	40,286
1939	46,000

1936	3,880,447
1937	3,743,904
1938	5,248,796
1939	5,764,200

The results of referendum votes among West Virginia farmers show the demand for full application of the A.A.A. programs. Important referenda in which West Virginia farmers participated were as follows:

<u>Nature of Referendum</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Votes of Participating Farmers</u>	<u>Percent For</u>	<u>Percent Against</u>
Corn-hogs	Oct. 1934	517	209	71
Wheat	May, 1935	1468	195	71
Tobacco: Burley	July, 1935	1,726	380	82
Corn-hogs	Oct. 1935	1,066	418	72
Tobacco: Burley	Apr. 1938	1,092	389	74
Burley	Dec. 1938	647	1,497	30

In West Virginia in 1940 there were 266 members and alternates of county A.A.A. committees and 1,039 members and alternates of community A.A.A. committees which administer the Agricultural Conservation Program locally. There were also 55 county committees of the Farm Security Administration in the State and 16 county tenant purchase committees. Cooperating with the Farm Credit Administration were 38 local National Farm Loan Associations and 4 Production Credit Associations.

Soil Conservation Districts are organized and developed under State laws by farmers, who have an opportunity to express their preferences both as to planning and operations within the District. By means of these Districts farmers can coordinate their efforts to control erosion thoroughly along watershed lines with technical assistance often being furnished by local, State and Federal agencies.

Land Use Planning by Farmers

Land Use Planning Committees study all agricultural problems, and how Federal, State, and local agricultural services can best be applied. Representative farm people and agricultural officials are members of both county and community planning committees. In this way farmers have a voice in planning what all public agricultural agencies will do in their communities.

In West Virginia 7 county Land Use Planning Committees, with 73 farmer members, have been formed and others were expected to be organized in 1940.

In the United States as a whole, approximately 135,000 farmers served on A.A.A. committees; there were 2,907 Debt Adjustment Committees; 1,239 Tenant Purchase Committees; and approximately 1,500 committees for rehabilitation loans; about 3,700 active National Farm Loan Associations, and 523 Production Credit Associations; approximately 370 Soil Conservation Districts were either organized or in the process of organization.

There were approximately 19,000 farmers by the end of 1939 participating as members of county Land Use Planning Committees, and 65,000 as members of community Land Use Planning Committees.

